

Delores Rubin Chair

Jesse R. Bodine District Manager

February 11, 2016

Mr. Richard Friendly And Mr. Scott Sternick Vodka Soda Bottoms Up 315 West 46th Street New York, NY 10036

Re: Follow-up from Vodka Soda Bottoms Up/ 315 West 46 Street appearance at the January 11th, 2016 Quality of Life Meeting

Dear Mr. Friendly and Mr. Sternick:

Manhattan Community Board 4 ("MCB4") writes to acknowledge that Mickey Spillane, Richard Winkelman, and Scott Sternick ("Owner and Management") of Vodka Soda Bottoms Up ("Vodka") appeared before its Quality of Life Committee ("QOL") on January 11, 2016. The meeting was held as a result of numerous complaints received from the residents of 313 and 317 West 46th Street, as well as St. Luke's Lutheran Church, which is directly across the street from Vodka. Approximately a dozen residents and a representative from the Church appeared at the meeting.

MCB4 appreciates Owner and Management's expressed willingness to take immediate action to rectify constituent complaints, which stem from the alleged violation of a number of important New York State Liquor Authority ("SLA") license stipulations, including **Occupancy and Use**, and, **Method of Operation**. MCB4 takes these complaints very seriously, as we do for all complaints received for other establishments in the confines of MCB4. These particular complaints are summarized as follows:

- Improper use of amplified music;
- Use of DJ;
- Dancing allowed without a Cabaret License; and
- Allegedly exceeding the number of patrons permitted on premises as per their Certificate of Occupancy

Complainants also voiced significant frustration regarding noise, sidewalk congestion and littering from patrons congregating outside of and/or lining up for entrance to your establishment, thereby causing the obstruction of adjoining building entrances as well.

tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512 www.nyc.gov/mcb4

CITY OF NEW YORK **MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR** 330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036

EXISTING STIPULATIONS

Occupancy and Use

It is MCB4's understanding that Vodka has a public assembly permit from the Department of Buildings ("DOB") for 149 people (including employees.) In marketing materials (Facebook, November 27, 2015), it was posted by an entity purporting to officially represent Vodka that: "Over 1,100 Thirst Traps walked thru our doors last Friday". Residents are very concerned that more than 149 people (including employees) may be permitted access to the premises at any one time. Hundreds of pictures posted on a Facebook site (purporting to officially represent Vodka) show a jam-packed party-like dance space. MCB4 is concerned that Vodka may be allowing more people into their establishment than legally permitted by their Certificate of Occupancy (See enclosure).

Description and Operation of Business

<u>MUSIC & DANCING</u>: The Method of Operation and License Type, to which Management agreed to in writing, is for a restaurant and bar only, and should be operated as such.

As you know, Vodka does <u>not</u> have a Cabaret License. Therefore, <u>dancing is strictly</u> <u>prohibited at all times</u>.

Accordingly, Vodka is not permitted to have a DJ, and must adhere to "Background Music" regulations. Background music is commonly understood to be amplified music/sound intended as an <u>unobtrusive</u> accompaniment to an activity, such as, in your case, dining in a restaurant. In any event, Vodka must comply with all relevant New York City codes and regulations as they relate to sound emanating from your establishment.

PROPOSED REMEDIATION

Communication

During the QOL January 2016 meeting, Management agreed to address the lack of effective communication between Vodka and neighboring residents, and expressed a willingness to create a positive working relationship. Unfortunately, the Committee must acknowledge that, to-date, Management's attempts to establish productive communications with residents have been highly inadequate. We continue to urge both you and the residents to make a best effort to develop a productive and effective means of civil discourse to assist in the resolution of the many continuing problems created by the operation of your establishment.

To that end, Richard Winkelman agreed to be Vodka's "point person" to address constituents' concerns. Mr. Winkelman agreed to work with complainants to ensure that his cellphone number (917) 806-9569 is circulated to nearby residents, as well as to St. Luke's Rev. Paul Schmiege.

Noise

Management has indicated on its Business License Permit stipulation form that a sound remediation plan was produced by Acoustilog, Inc. In light of the ongoing complaints, we request that this plan be reviewed, updated accordingly and implemented <u>immediately</u> by a certified noise consultant (See Enclosure). Further, we request that the noise consultant conducts comprehensive tests of noise levels in adjoining residences *during Vodka's busiest hours of operation*. Mr. Jesse Bodine, District Manager of MCB4, will be happy to work with you, your certified noise consultant and residents to schedule any sound readings.

Management proposed the installation of acoustical soundboards in 315 West 46th Street's common hallways, which is estimated to be completed by the end of February. (Update: During the writing of this letter, Management's attorney informed MCB4's District Manager, Jesse Bodine that Vodka has, "received permission from the landlord of their building to soundproof the inner and outer wall in the hallways and is working with a sound engineer." In addition, at QoL's February meeting, Vodka's management agreed to the immediate installation of sound baffling materials on the common walls that adjoin their establishment with 317 West 46th).

Furthermore, if given permission by building owners, *Management will consider installing insulated windows in the adjoining buildings if it is not cost prohibitive.*

In conclusion, MCB4 kindly requests <u>written</u> confirmation that you will adhere to the following:

- 1. All current DoB permits, license and occupancy regulations;
- 2. SLA and MCB4 stipulations, including:
 - a. no DJs;
 - b. no dancing;
 - c. amplified sound decible levels that are in accordance with all New York City noise codes, as cited above; and
 - d. strict occupancy of 149 people (including employees) at any one time.
- 3. The cessation of posting commentary and/or pictures on all social media that Owner and Management controls which in any way markets Vodka as an establishment that specifically features dancing and the use of DJs (See Enclosure);
- 4. Please provide promptly any future sound remediation report or updates to your original report by a city approved acoustical sound engineer (see attached list.);
- 4. Please provide a timeline to enact remediation recommendations provided by the acoustical sound engineer;

- 5. Please provide details on any other sound remediation efforts that have, and will, be enacted:
- <u>6.</u> Please provide a copy of your SLA approved permanent seating plan (including a diagram of table layout) if different than what was originally filed with MCB4; and
- 7. Please provide a draft of a security plan that will support the resolution of the complaints listed in this letter.

Kindly send your letter and supporting documents to Mr. Jesse Bodine at MCB4's district office no later than Monday, February 29th, 2016.

The members of MCB4's Quality of Life Committee look forward to your attendance at the March 7, 2016 meeting to discuss the results of your efforts.

Sincerely,

Delores Rubin Chair Community Board 4

Enclosure

cc:

David Pincus

David Pincus Co-Chair Quality of Life Committee

Tina DiFeliciantonio Co-Chair Quality of Life Committee

Hon. Brad Hoylman, State Senate Hon. Dick Gottfried, State Assembly Hon. Corey Johnson, City Council Michael Jones, Deputy Chief Executive Officer John Hart, Commanding Officer, Midtown North Precinct Michael Dugan, Detective, Midtown North Precinct Residents of West 46 Street



APPROVED NOISE CONSULTANT LIST FOR COMMERCIAL MUSIC MITIGATION

Updated: January 20, 2016

Attached is a list of persons who have applied to be noise experts and have been approved under the DEP Noise Code.

As the premise/business owner, you should know there are a great many noise mitigation issues possible at each premises. Prior to retaining an expert, it is incumbent upon the owner to verify that the particular educational and actual experience is applicable to the owner's particular noise mitigation circumstances, as well as verifying the pricing for such services.

NOTE: The hiring of a consultant from this list does not shield the owner from a violation of the Noise Code should applicable noise levels be exceeded during a DEP inspection.

Note: Any consultant that does not have current contact information may be removed from this list.

Daniel Abatemarco AKRF, Inc. 440 Park Avenue South New York, NY 10016 P. (646) 388-9708

Faud F. Adib Applemon Corp. 151 South Mountain Road New City, NY 10956 P. (845) 634-0858 www.applemon.com

Ken Andria Acoustic Distinctions 145 Huguenot Street New Rochelle, NY 10801 P. (914) 712-1300 www.acousticdistinctions.com

Alban Bassuet ARUP 77 Water Street, 5th Floor New York, NY 10005 P. (212) 229-2669

Silas J. Bensing Wilson, Ihrig & Associates, Inc. 65 Broadway, Suite 401 New York, NY 10006 P. (212) 785-0485 www.wiai.com Ronald Bielinski, P.E. Erwin & Bielinski, PLLC 37 West 39 Street, Suite 1201 New York, NY 10018 P. (212) 391-4750 F. (212) 391-4752

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Ryan Glotzbecker EREMOS LLC 2005 Merrick Road #304 Merrick, NY 11566 P. (516) 578-5914 rglotzbecker@eremos.com www.eremos.com Lewis S. Goodfriend Lewis S. Goodfriend & Associates 760 Route 10 Whippany, NJ 07981 P. (973) 560-0090 www.LSAG.com

Mr. Steven Haas SH Acoustics 10 Higgins Drive Milford CT., 06460 P. (203) 877-6340

John R. Hauenstein, President JRH Acoustical Consulting, Inc. 1440 Broadway, Room 2343 New York, NY 10018 P. (212) 246-6727 john@jrhac.com www.acoustilog.com

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